

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An open door alert system for a vehicle comprising:  
a sensor that determines if a door is open;  
a controller responsive to the sensor to activate a vehicle exterior mounted light to flash when the door is open.
2. The open door alert system of claim 1 wherein the door is a sliding door.
3. The open door alert system of claim 1 wherein the exterior light is operable to function as a warning light.
4. The open door alert system of claim 1 wherein the exterior light comprises an exterior turn signal indicator.
5. The open door alert system of Claim 1 further comprising an interior vehicle light activated to flash by the controller when the door is open.
6. The open door alert system of claim 1 further comprising a vehicle speed sensor, wherein the controller communicates with the vehicle

speed sensor and activates the exterior light if the door is open and a vehicle speed is below a threshold.

7. The open door alert system of claim 1 wherein the controller activates the exterior light for a predetermined time period.

8. The open door alert system of claim 1 wherein the controller deactivates the exterior light if the door is closed.

9. A method for indicating an open door in a vehicle comprising:

determining if a door is open; and

flashing a vehicle exterior light if the door is open.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the flashing causes the vehicle exterior light to function as a warning light.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein the flashing occurs for a predetermined time period.

12. The method of claim 9 further comprising terminating the flashing after a predetermined time period.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising terminating the flashing if the door is closed.